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Synopsis of Important Articles.

The Davidic Authorship of the 110 Psalm.* On this subject the London papers have been carrying on a controversy, the point of which is this: has modern criticism the right to question whether or not this Psalm was written by David? To some, an absolute negative seems the only answer, because Christ, in quoting from this Psalm, speaks of the words as David's. To others, this is not conclusive, but they will decide according to the external and internal evidence as to the authorship, and if it conflicts with Jesus' words, they will then explain the divergence. The explanation will be one of two: either that Christ spoke so, not knowing that David was not the author; or, knowing he was not the author of the Psalm, he yet spoke as if he were. The first explanation is offered on the ground of a limitation of Christ's knowledge, as implied in Phil. 2:5-8 and Mk. 13:32. There were many things he did not need to know. His mission was a moral and spiritual one. All the knowledge needed to perform his office perfectly he possessed, but the rest he had laid aside. In matters of literary history, which were unimportant, he knew only as men knew, and the 110th Psalm was then understood to be by David. Thus his misconception (if it was such) is accounted for. The second explanation is that Jesus, while knowing everything (including every detail of literary authorship forever), yet did not communicate such knowledge because it was no part of his work to do so. In unessential matters he accommodated himself to the limited knowledge and imperfect condition of the people among whom he lived. In quoting from this Psalm, it was no part of his work to enter upon a discussion of its authorship. The argument he uses is *ad hominem*, and it is effective. That was all that was necessary. And there are other illustrations that this was his customary way of dealing with the people in unessentials.

This plainly sets forth the three possible views concerning the problem in hand, and unnumbered other problems of a similar character. Each of the three views is possible, because each is held by certain evangelical Christian scholars. One may not choose which he will adopt except after the most comprehensive and thorough study of all the elements involved—history, tradition, incarnation, methods of Jesus. The solution is not an easy one to make, and it is doubtful whether agreement can be reached. The important thing is a breadth of conception which understands and appreciates all three explanations.

Partition and Derivation Theories of the Fourth Gospel.† The great mass of liberal opinion in its more reasonable exponents is so alive to the weight of the arguments for the genuineness of the Gospel that it is trending more and more in the direction of a compromise, a solution which shall not cut the Gospel adrift, but connect it by some tie, stronger or weaker, with the beloved apostle. This takes two forms: (1) that of the partition theory, which divides the Gospel into sections, and assigns a major portion of them to John but the

* Editorial in the *Expository Times*, April, 1892.

† Being Article VI. in the series upon "The Present Position of the Johannean Question," by Prof. W. Sanday, D. D., in *The Expositor*, May, 1892.

rest to some one else ; (2) that of the derivation theory, which assigns no part of the Gospel immediately to the apostle, but makes it the work of one of John's disciples putting into permanent form the tradition which he received from his master. Critics of the former class take different views, as Renan and Matthew Arnold, the first holding the narrative material genuine, and rejecting the discourses, the second holding exactly the reverse, and both positions are explicable in accordance with the style and view-point of each man's criticism. The most recent attempts at partition of the Gospel material do not proceed exactly on this line, though the most important of them—that by Dr. H. H. Wendt—supports the discourses, endeavoring to throw them to the end of the ministry. This is a desirable accomplishment, but it would be more satisfactory to explain the facts by what I have ventured to call the process of "shortening," or anticipation of later utterances on earlier occasions, to which the mind of the aged evangelist might naturally be liable. Prof. Hugo Delff divides on a different basis. He concludes that the author was a native of Jerusalem, a member of one of the high-priestly families ; therefore the range of the Gospel vision must be bounded by the horizon of Jerusalem. The additions made to the original document were with a view to harmonizing it (a) with the Galileean tradition, established through the other Gospels ; (b) with the current chiliastic expectations ; (c) with the philosophy of Alexandria. But the "solid and compact unity" alike in language, in structure and in thought, is indeed the keynote of the Gospel, and marks the fatal objection to any theory of partition. I have little doubt that the more closely the Gospel is studied, the more conclusively will this be proved. The derivation theory is maintained by Schürer, Reuss, Renan, and most ably by Weizsäcker, who pictures the school gathered about the apostle at Ephesus, and which, under the influence of his teaching, produced the Fourth Gospel in the following generation. Thus they obtain room in it for a greater freedom of handling. Now if the Fourth Gospel is not by John, then distinctly next, in order of probability, is this theory of Weizsäcker's, very much in the form in which he has himself stated it. But this theory is incompatible with the facts, which prove (as has been previously seen) that the author of the Gospel was himself a Jew, a Jew of Palestine, a contemporary, an eye-witness, an apostle. No other hypothesis satisfies the material or accounts for the phenomena of the Gospel.

And Prof. Sanday expands the last point made, in a convincing manner. It is exceedingly interesting to study the lines of division assumed, the principles and conceptions underlying the partition theories concerning the origin of the Fourth Gospel. Each proceeds in its own way, and they mutually destroy each other—their essential subjectivity becomes strikingly apparent. Derivation theories are more consistent and more attractive, and yet how far from satisfactory they are has been skillfully and admirably exhibited by Prof. Sanday in his recent articles. One does not hesitate to pronounce them the best discussion of the current phases of the Johannan Question now accessible to English readers, and worthy of studious attention.